

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00307 251832 Z

46

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 IO-12

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----- 030685

R 251535 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3432

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 307

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB SF

SUBJ: VORSTER INSISTS WAGE INCREASES FOR BLACKS
MUST BE LINKED TO PRODUCTIVITY

1. IN APRIL 24 PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON PRIME MINISTER' S
VOTE, OPPOSITION FOCUSED ON ECONOMIC MATTERS, ESPECIALLY
VORSTER GOVERNMENT' S FAILURE TO STEM RISING INFLATION.
IN RESPONSE VORSTER STATED THAT WORKERS SHOULD BE PAID
ACCORDING TO THEIR PRODUCTIVITY NOT ACCORDING TO COLOR
OF THEIR SKIN. REGARDING REASONABLE WAGE INCREASES FOR
BLACK LABOR, HE SAID SAG WAS DOING ITS DUTY, AND HE ASSERTED
THAT " THE MAJORITY OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAVE FULFILLED
THEIR OBLIGATION IN THIS REGARD, BUT OTHERS HAVE NOT."
HE ALSO SAID: " THE IDEA OF A PELL MELL INCREASE IN WAGES
SIMPLY TO YIELD TO PRESSURE FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS IN
BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES IS QUITE WRONG."
THROWING IN ANOTHER RED HERRING FOR GOOD MEASURE,
VORSTER DECLARED THAT SOME PEOPLE WITHIN AND
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00307 251832 Z

OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT WERE PLAYING DANGEROUS GAME IN TRYING TO BREAK DOWN WHAT HE SAID WAS SOUTH AFRICA' S FREE ECONOMIC SYSTEM BY " PROPAGATING SOCIALISM IN A DIS-GUISED FORM" THROUGH THEIR ADVOCACY OF " A RE- ALLOCATION OF ASSETS."

2. COMMENT: VORSTER' S EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTIVITY AS CRITERION FOR WAGE INCREASE IGNORES ECONOMIC PLIGHT OF BLACK WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND INDICATES THAT SAG' S PROFESSED CONCERN FOR WELFARE OF BLACKS MAY NOT EXTEND MUCH BEYOND RHETORIC. HIS REFERENCE TO PRESSURES FROM UK AND US DEMONSTRATES WHAT WE ALREADY FULLY AWARE OF -- HIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT' S EXTREME ANNOYANCE AT EFFORTS OF THOSE OUTSIDE SA TO STIMULATE CHANGE IN THIS COUNTRY. FINALLY, IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT VORSTER' S ASSERTION THAT MOST OF PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS HAVE " FULFILLED THEIR OBLIGATIONS" RE PROVIDING BLACK WORKERS WITH DECENT WAGES WAS COMPLETELY SPURIOUS CLAIM. SUCH WAGE INCREASES THAT HAVE BEEN GIVEN THUS FAR HAVE BEEN PIECEMEAL AND CONSTITUTE NO MORE THAN A BEGINNING TOWARD ALLEVIATING THE DEEP POVERTY THAT IS REALITY FOR MOST BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.
HURD

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